

Q. 4-1547

Evidentiary document # 5339.

I, Robert Andrew Nicol, aged 42, Anglo-Burman, an Inspector in the Revenue department of the Municipal Corporation of Rangoon, resident at No. 81, Sandwith Road, Rangoon, being duly sworn states as follows:-

Prior to the occupation of Rangoon by the Japanese forces, I was permanently resident at Rangoon but with the approaching advent of the Japanese, I evacuated from Rangoon in 20th February 1941 and I remained at Myaungmya till 25th May 1945.

On Wednesday, 7th either February or March 45, I can't remember which, at about 1000 hrs. a lorry stopped in front of my house in MYAUNGMYA, and B. HLAING, a young Burman accompanied by a Jap soldier (three stars), came to my house and enquired if I could speak English and Burmese fluently. When I told them I could, I was asked to accompany them.

I was taken in the lorry to the MONSIEUR reserve forest, and when I arrived there, I saw one young R.A.F. Sergeant with a Wireless Operator badge, together with two sentries with rifles and bayonets and a Jap soldier with a sword (one line and three stars). The sergeant was seated with both hands tied behind his back. About one hundred yards away I saw three other airmen standing, guarded by approximately 25 Jap soldiers. The senior officer amongst this party seemed to be a man about 5 ft. 2 ins to 5 ft. 3 ins. wearing a white shirt, riding breeches and brown jack boots. I thought that he was the Senior Officer as he was the only man present wearing a sword and revolver. He was approximately 22 years of age and rather fair for a Japanese.

I was taken by the Jap soldier (one line three stars), B. HLAING and the driver, to where the sergeant was seated. The Jap soldier (one line three stars) spoke to B. HLAING in Japanese and B. HLAING translated back to me in Burmese and I was told to interpret for him in English to the airmen. Most of the questions were about the different wavelengths the R.A.F. used to communicate with their base. The young sergeant would only say that the dials were fixed before leaving the base. While B. HLAING was translating back to the Japanese soldier, I managed to get the airmen's name. He told me that his name was STAN WOODERIDGE and that he came from CHINGFORD, ESSEX, ENGLAND.

When the airmen would not disclose any of the information required, B. HLAING took off his belt and struck him several times across the back with the buckle end of the belt. Then the Jap soldier (one line three stars) struck WOODERIDGE on the head with the flat of his sword several times, then the questions were repeated but WOODERIDGE refused to give any different answers. This questioning lasted for about an hour.

When the questioning was finished, WOODERIDGE was taken by the four Japanese and B. HLAING towards the other group which was one hundred yards away. Then the whole party, including the four airmen and B. HLAING went away into the forest. As they were moving off I asked the driver by signs if they were going to shoot the airmen and he indicated

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that they were going to be beheaded. I then went back to the lorry and waited there alone for about half an hour, until the Japs returned. One of them was carrying a pick-axe, another a shovel and others carrying the airman's clothes. The uniforms were rolled up into a bundle which was carried by one man, and so I could not see how many there were. I did see four pairs of shoes carried by other Jap soldiers. B. HLAING was with them. The whole party, including myself and B. HLAING was with them. The whole party, including myself and B. HLAING, climbed into the lorry and we were driven back to the town where I got off at the crossroads.

(Signed) R.A. NICOL.

Date: 5.7.46.

Sworn before me this 5th day of July 1946.

(Signed) ?  
5th Additional Magistrate,  
Rangoon.